



[001] A METHOD AND AN APPARATUS FOR IDENTIFICATION AND CONTROL OF HANDLING OF KEYS AND THE LIKE

[002] FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[003] The present invention relates to a method for identification and control of the handling of keys. The invention also relates to an apparatus for carrying out the method.

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[004] SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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[005] In offices, factories, hospitals, hotels, security companies, car repair shops and car rental services, mail-carrying companies, shipping agencies, banks, apartment buildings, real estate companies, etc., usually a relatively large number of keys for various properties, apartments, rooms, file cabinets, safe-deposit boxes, cars, etc., are circulated. The keys are used by a fairly large group of people and so far it has been difficult or impossible to keep track of the whereabouts of certain keys/persons at certain points of time. Mistakes and neglects can easily occur, when the key cabinet is used and also when keys are manually handed out and this is registered. Also, all personal handling is very time consuming and expensive.

[006] In order to avoid to a large extent the last mentioned drawbacks electronic circuitries including IC-circuits have already been used, which can identify certain used codes, which are associated with a loose object. However, partly the design of these electronic circuitries is imperfect and limited and partly their applications are defective and impractical, and consequently the security cannot be guaranteed and a reliable survey of the situation is lacking.

[007] US-A-4 549 170 relates to a system for handling a key panel. The panel is designed for a very large number of, namely, one thousand keys which mutually can and presumably should vary rather strongly (see Figs 1 and 2). Each key with its special design will be used in a particular corresponding special opening having a fitting module in said panel (see column 3, lines 9-15).

[008] This may cause a difficult search, in case corresponding numbers are not available. The keys are completely conventional but designed to, when they have been inserted into the panel, trigger an electric contact via their handle or tip or

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